

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method of assisting a patient locate and purchase a needed medical supply, comprising:
  - a) prescribing from a medical care provider to a patient a needed medical supply;
  - b) providing a network gateway associated with said medical care provider, the gateway accessible through a computer interface;
  - c) conveying order information to a medical supply vendor through the gateway; and
  - d) arranging payment through the gateway.
2. The method of claim 1 wherein providing a network gateway comprises providing a web page.
3. The method of claim 1 wherein conveying order information to a medical supply vendor comprises conveying the order information through an e-commerce provider.
4. The method of claim 1 further comprising accepting payment information from the patient.
5. The method of claim 1 further comprising securing payment from a credit card.
6. The method of claim 1 further comprising crediting payment to an account associated with the medical care provider.
7. The method of claim 6 wherein the medical supply vendor bills the medical care provider.

8. The method of claim 1 wherein prescribing from a medical care provider to a patient a needed medical supply comprises prescribing a medical device.

9. The method of claim 1 wherein prescribing from a medical care provider to a patient a needed medical supply comprises prescribing a pharmaceutical.

10. A system for assisting a patient locate and purchase a needed medical supply, said system comprising a computer configured to:

provide a network gateway associated with a medical care provider, said gateway adapted to facilitate the location and purchase of a prescribed medical supply, wherein said prescribed medical supply was prescribed by the medical care provider;

convey order information to a medical supply vendor through the gateway; and  
arrange payment through the gateway.

11. A computer readable medium comprising software configured to:

provide a network gateway associated with a medical care provider, said gateway adapted to facilitate the location and purchase of a prescribed medical supply, wherein said prescribed medical supply was prescribed by the medical care provider;

convey order information to a medical supply vendor through the gateway; and  
arrange payment through the gateway.

12. A method of ordering a prescribed medical supply via a web site particularly associated with a prescribing medical care provider, comprising:

- a. prescribing a medical supply for a patient wherein the prescription is made by the medical care provider;
- b. ordering the prescribed medical supply through the web site associated with the prescribing medical care provider, including the steps of:
  - i. accessing the web site of the prescribing medical care provider;
  - ii. locating a medical supply store associated with the prescribing medical care provider's web site;
  - iii. searching the medical supply store for the prescribed medical supply;
  - iv. after locating the prescribed medical supply on the prescribing medical care provider's web site, ordering the medical supply from a vendor linked to the web site of the prescribing medical care provider;
  - v. securing payment for the ordered medical supply;
  - vi. crediting payment for the prescribed medical supply to an account associated with the medical care provider; and
  - vii. debiting the sales price of the prescribed medical supply to an account associated with the medical care provider.

13. The method of claim 12 wherein the web site of the medical care provider is linked to an e-commerce provider and wherein one or more transactions relating to the ordering or delivery of the prescribed medical supply is transacted through the e-commerce provider.

14. The method of claim 13 including directing payment information from the patient to the e-commerce provider that in turn authorizes payment.

15. The method of claim 14 wherein the e-commerce provider credits the account of the medical care provider and also charges the medical care provider a transaction fee.

16. The method of claim 13 wherein the e-commerce provider is linked to one or more vendors represented in the medical supply store associated with the web site of the medical care provider.

17. The method of claim 16 wherein for each order and sale, the e-commerce provider effectuates payment for the ordered medical supply, appropriately credits an account of the medical care provider, and communicates the order to a selected vendor.

18. A method of prescribing and delivering medical supplies to patients comprising:

- prescribing a medical supply to a patient through a medical care provider;
- accessing a web page associated with the prescribing medical care provider;
- accessing a medical supply store associated with the web page of the medical supply provider;

d. locating the prescribed medical supply within the medical supply store;  
and  
e. ordering the prescribed medical supply.

19. The method of claim 18 wherein the medical supply provider's web page is linked to an e-commerce provider that takes the order for a prescribed medical supply and effectuates the payment and crediting of certain accounts associated with the transaction and arranges for the delivery of these prescribed medical supplies to the patient.

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